Serving Marine Corps Air Station New River and Jacksonville, N.C. www.newriver.usmc.mil Jan. 11, 2006 Vol. 45 No. 1

NEW SGTS. MAJ.



Three New River squadrons hold Post and Relief ceremonies for incoming sergeants major

SEE PAGE 3

SQUADRON STREAMERS



HMH-461 adds campaign, service streamer to unit colors

SEE PAGE 6

HIGH-SPEED CHEER



Statewide Corvette Clubs bring toys for families of deployed servicemembers

SEE PAGE 28





Command Message

The 2006 Marine Corps Air Station New River Air Show will be held May 12, 13 and 14 on the New River flightline.

For more information about the Air Show, contact Maj. Michael Wood at 449-5007.

There will be a Texas Hold 'Em Poker Night at the Staff Noncommissioned Officers' Club every third Friday of each month.

The first cards will be dealt at 6:30 p.m. and play ends at midnight.

Tickets cost \$20.

The Camp Geiger Post Office (Building TC-1003) is now open for business from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If you are unable to go to the Air Station Post Office during their regular hours, you now have the added convenience of using the Camp Geiger Post Office.

It is run by Marines, but they do mail out personal items.

For more information on the services the Post Office can provide, please contact them at 449-0273

Community

The Jacksonville Friends of the Library will host an afternoon tea with North Carolina author Pamela Duncan, Jan. 28, beginning at 4 p.m.

Duncan, author of "Moon Women" and "Plant Life" will share insights on her books over tea and light refreshments.

Advanced reservation is required to attend.

For more information, call 455-7350 ext. 233.

The Onslow County Library and Camp Lejeune Library will host an Open Mic Adult Poetry Night in the Camp Lejeune Base Library Conference Room Jan. 31, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Seating is limited and registration is required.

For more information, or to register, please call 451-5724.

All branches of Onslow County Public Library System will be closed Jan. 16, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr., Day.

The Kinston 8000: A Run for the River race will take place March 26 at 8:30 a.m.

Marines interested in running the race can call Tim Knobeloch at (252) 939-3336.

Education

The Scholarships for Military Children program applications are available and must be turned in by close of business Feb. 22.

The program is open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active duty personnel, Reserve, Guard and retired military.

Applications, eligibility and other information for the 2006 Scholarships for Military Children program are available at http://www.militaryscholar.org or http://www.commissaries.com.

The Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation is looking for students who qualify for Academic Year 2006-2007 scholarships.

Scholarships range annually from \$500 to \$10,000.

Students qualify if they are the son or daughter of a Marine on active duty or Reserve, son or daughter of a former Marine or Marine Reservist or son or daughter of an active duty, reserve or former U.S. Navy Corpsman who is serving or has served with the Marine Corps.

Graduating high school seniors' application submission is due by March 1, 2006 and all other students are due by April 15, 2006.

Application forms are available to download from www.mcsf.org.

Religious Info

The Weekly Men's Bible Study Group meets every Thursday morning at 6 a.m., at the Mainside Protestant Chapel Annex behind the Base Chapel.

For more information, contact Chaplain James Dance at 451-3210, Maj. Jo Rozier at 451-7842, Staff Sgt. Stacey Lafferty at 450-8595 or Jim Sides at 451-5024.

In the Corps

Career roadmaps are available for enlisted Marines and their leaders

Roadmaps offer a single source reference for Military Occupational Specialty training, education requirements and recommendations.

The program was initiated in 2004 and is designed to offer Marines a "one-stop-shop" guide that will enable them to capitalize on all available opportunities to enhance professional, educational and personal development.

For more information, go to www.tecom.usmc.mil/g3/roadmap. php. or read All Marine Message 044/05.

Dependents of servicemembers who die on active duty will be paid basic allowance for housing for each day after the date of the member's death, not to exceed 365 days.

Dependents qualify for BAH as long as they do not occupy a housing facility under the jurisdiction of a Uniformed Service on a nonrental basis

The allowance shall be paid in the same amount and in the same manner as that which the member would have been paid.

Marines interested in recruiters assistance in the Colorado, Wyoming, Western Nebraska or Western South Dakota areas are needed.

Those interested are encouraged to contact at Sgt. Maj. Robert Cadle at his email address, cadlerg@marines.usmc.mil or call (303) 241-8102.



Civilian Spotlight

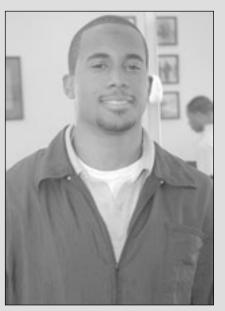
Lamont Hall

Barber, Corner Barber Shop

Hometown:

Beulaville, N.C.

Family: Lamont is married to Melanie Hall.



Military background: Lamont has no military background, but enjoys working with the Marines at New River.

Time on Station: Lamont says he has been working at Marine Corps Air Station New River for over ten years.

Best part of job: Hall said the best part of his job is that he gets to interact with lots of different people around the Air Station. "I enjoy getting to meet new people everyday and I have a good work environment here at the barber shop as far as customers and coworkers."

Best part of working with the military: Lamont said the best part of working with the military is that it is consistent. "The consistency of the Marines and their work ethic is the best part of being around the military because it's pretty much the same thing since I have been here."

Best advice received: "Stay focused because that's the only way you can achieve objectives in life," said Hall. "It was said to me by Carlos Young, a fellow coworker here at the barber shop."

Person whose lifestyle I'd like to emulate: Hall said he enjoys his own lifestyle and wouldn't like it to emulate that of anyone elses.

Personal hero: Lamont said his personal hero is his father. "My father is my hero because he's been a great dad, he's a good role model and he showed me how to be successful in life."

Are you excited about the Super Bowl this year?: "I'm not particularly excited about the Super Bowl this year, but I'd like to see the Indianapolis Colts win it," said Lamont, who has a large amount of respect for Indianapolis head coach Tony Dungy.

RotoVue

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Col. Stephen L. Forand

Executive Officer
Lt. Col. Frank H. Miner

<u>Sergeant Major</u> Sgt. Maj. Lewis Summerville <u>Public Affairs Officer</u> Capt. Stuart J. Fugler

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Editor Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale

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If you have any comments or suggestions you may also contact the public affairs office at (910) 449-6196 or fax (910) 449-6478.



Sergeants Major play musical 'posts'

H&HS meets new top enlisted

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White correspondent

Sergeant Maj. Grant VanOostrom relinquished position of top enlisted of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron to Sgt. Maj. Scott M. Smith during a Post and Relief ceremony at the New River Fitness Center Dec. 22.

Smith, former first sergeant of Alpha Company, Engineer Support Battalion, Camp Okinawa Japan, will assume duties as H&HS sergeant major as VanOostrom takes charge of the first operational Osprey squadron, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-263.

Though serving as sergeant major of H&HS for a short amount of time, VanOostrom thanks the Marines of the squadron for their efforts while under his command.

'I would like to thank the officers, staff (noncommissioned officers) and junior Marines of

(H&HS)," said VanOostrom. "I hope their efforts continue to shine throughout the Marine Corps."

Smith also had several Marines to thank for his position, including the former sergeant major of the

"Lieutenant Col. Miner, Col. Forand, Lt. Col. Kleine, Sgt. Maj. Summerville, thank you for allowing me to hold this post and be sergeant major of (H&HS)," said Smith. "Also, thank you Sgt. Maj. VanoOstrom. I couldn't be happier, or more fortunate, to be following in the footsteps of this fine Marine.

Sergeant Maj. Smith's personal awards include the Navy Commendation Medal with Gold star in lieu of second award, and Navy Achievement Medal.

Sergeant Maj. Smith is married to Mrs. Leigh Smith and they have two children, Lyvia and Dominic. Smith has a second daughter, Stephanie.



Lieutenant Col. Gregory F. Kleine, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron commanding officer, passes the noncommissioned officers' sword to the incoming sergeant major, Sgt. Maj. Smith, during a Post and Relief ceremony.

HMH-461 welcomes Potts as new Sqt. Maj.

Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale correspondent

Sergeant Maj. Larry C. Jones relinquished the duties of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 sergeant major to Sgt. Maj. Conrad E. Potts during a ceremony on the flightline Dec. 9.

The ceremony also marked Jones' retirement after 26 years of

"I've always been impressed by the professionalism of the Marines around me," said Jones. "I see the Marines of this squadron as the future of the Corps. Guys like me go away, but they'll continue to do the great job they've always done."

According to Lt. Col. Robert D. Pridgen, HMH-461 commanding officer, Jones has served proudly and is an example for other Marines

"There is nothing he wouldn't do for a fellow Marine," he said. "I've felt after each day that I am a better Marine and certainly a better commanding officer because of Sgt.

Pridgen said he believes Potts will take the squadron to new heights due to his experience and

but I think we'll learn a lot from him," he said. "He comes to us with a lot of energy and it's obvious that he's the best choice to be our new sergeant major."



Gunrunners open the door for new Sgt. Maj.

Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb correspondent

Sergeant Maj. Terry D. Stanford took over as HML/A-269's top enlisted Marine for Sgt. Maj. Carl H. Rodriguez.

Rodriguez said giving up his position with the squadron was necessary, but difficult.

"It is with a heavy heart that I move on to my next challenge," said Rodriguez.

According to Stanford, he has never felt as welcome has he did in his first few days with the Gunrunners.

"I want to thank you all for

making this the smoothest transition possible," said Stanford.

He said he felt the squadron was happy to welcome him with

"I see, I sense and I know your tenacity, your professionalism, your drive and your gut after only the first couple of days here. Ground, wing, support – it doesn't matter. One word: Marine," Stanford said to the Marines of HML/A-269

Rodriguez said, "Later in "He can learn a little from us, my old age I may happen to forget some things about the unit, but I will never forget how well you can fight."



Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale

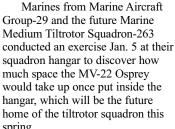
Sergeant Maj. Larry C. Jones, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 outgoing sergeant major, renders a salute while the squadron's color guard presents the colors for the National Anthem during his post and relief ceremony on the New River flightline. Jones retired after 26 years of service.



Testing the nest for the new flock of Ospreys

Thunder Chickens maneuver MV-22 into squadron hangar to check space capabilities









Space will be an important concern for future squadrons as they try to accomadate a new aircraft in limited space.

The Marines tried to fit the Osprey while in several different configurations - with the rotors vertical, horizontal, and tilted.

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White



PMO urges people to participate in new program

Lance Cpl. Brandon R. Holgersen correspondent

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJE-UNE, N.C. -- The Provost Marshal's Office is pushing a new program called Operation Identification due to recent burglaries in the family housing areas here.

Operation Identification is a nationally recognized property identification program open to all residents here and in the Marine Corps Air Station New River community.

The program is designed to deter thieves from stealing property and aid in stolen property recovery.

The system is simple, but effective. It is accomplished by engraving personal property with a serial number of the abbreviation of the state of residence and driver's license number.

"Marked property is difficult for a thief or burglar to dispose of or resell and can be traced to the rightful owner with relative ease," said Lt. Col. Stephen A. Simpson, the provost marshal for MCB. "If a perpetrator is caught with marked property, it is solid evidence of possession of stolen goods."

To participate in the program, call the Physical Security Section of PMO at 451-

4339 or visit PMO between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. daily. A military policeman will engrave the items and obtain the necessary identifying information for the accompanying form.

It is also possible to borrow an electric engraver to use at home, which must be returned within 48 hours. The Provost Marshal's Office doesn't take responsibility for damaged engravers.

The engraver is easy and safe to use and should be practiced with before engraving belongings. Use a piece of paper to practice on by touching the engraver very lightly to the surface. Don't press down, just let the engraver do the work. For wood or glass, hold the engraver straight up and down to prevent chipping or splintering.

Once PMO has the information on the belongings, the owner that or can place an accompanying flyer in their barracks room or house window to warn thieves of participation in the program.

It is important to keep a copy of all the



Lance Cpl. Brandon R. Holgersen

Once PMO has the information on the belongings, the owner that of others. This system of engraving is simple, yet effective, in aiding in the recovery of stolen items.

serial numbers in a safe place so they are not lost and so there is an extra copy on hand. If housed in the barracks, it might be a good idea to send the list to a relative for safekeeping. It is important to engrave new items purchased and add it to the list, as well as take pictures of smaller items so they can be easily identified.



New SecNav tours Station



The Honorable Mr. Donald C. Winter, the 74th Secretary of the Navy, walks with Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Moore, 2d Marine Air Wing commanding general, during a tour of the Station Jan. 9.

Ironhorses decorate colors HMH-461 adds several new battle streamers



Lieutenant Col. Robert D. Pridgen, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 commanding officer, attaches a new battle streamer to the unit colors.

Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale correspondent

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 added two new streamers to its unit colors during a ceremony on the flightline Dec.

The Global War on Terrorism Service streamer and GWOT Expeditionary streamer were attached by Lt. Col. Robert D. Pridgen, HMH-461 commanding officer, who said the streamers symbolize the sacrifices and determination of the squadron's Marines and the role they play to protect their country.

"Those streamers will stay with the colors for the life of the squadron," Pridgen added. "The ceremony is important because these Marines can look back years from now and remember when the streamers were added and be proud of what they all accomplished."

HMH-461 was the first CH-53E squadron to be based out of Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, Africa, after the start of the Global War on Terrorism, providing heavy-lift support for the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa.

"It's a quiet, often unsung, but critical part of the war on terror," Pridgen said. "You just don't hear about Africa, but the potential for that area to become a breeding ground is significant. Our presence there, in both civil and humanitarian affairs, is in many ways a preventative role and our success is measured in what we're not seeing."

According to Sgt. Maj. Larry C. Jones, HMH-461 sergeant major, the new streamers are especially meaningful because while deployed to Africa, one of the "Ironhorses" lost his life in an unfortunate accident.

"It had a dramatic impact, but the Marines were able to pull it together and complete the mission," he said.

Pridgen, who deployed to Africa three times, said he was proud at the end of each day by how well the squadron's Marines maintained and flew their aircraft in the difficult and hazardous environment.

"I don't think people appreciate the job these guys do and under what conditions they do it," said Pridgen. "Everyday I realized how great it was to be a Marine and a '53' guy. I don't know how they do what they do. It's magic."





CNATT helps rebuild history

Five instructors from the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training school stand in front a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter at the Carolinas Aviation Museum in Charlotte, N.C., on the morning of Dec. 22.

The five Marines volunteered to assist the museum's workers in restoring the helicopter once known as "Blood, Sweat and Tears," that had flown for the Corps for over 40 years.

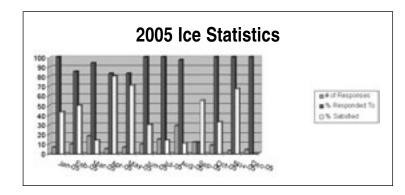
The instructors brought with them some additional parts, the special tools and the technical knowledge needed to complete the next steps in reassembling the helicopter.

Hammes conducts officer PME



Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

Thomas X. Hammes, a retired Marine Corps colonel and author of the book, "The Sling and the Stone: On War in the Twenty-First Century," conducted an officer professional military education session with Marines from Marine Aircraft Group-29 on Dec. 16.





Joseph A. Anglin: Gone, but not forgotten HMM-264 Marines honor fellow 'Black Knight' at Station Chapel Dec. 6

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White correspondent

"Pfc. Anglin." An eerie silence falls over the Station Memorial Chapel.

"Pfc. Anglin."

Master Gunnery Sgt. Mitch D. Baker, Sr., Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-264 acting sergeant major, raises his tone as he stands in front of the squadron, awaiting an answer from the junior devil dog.

"Pfc. Anglin," booms throughout the Chapel walls a final time, loud enough to make the windows shake and Marine's hair stand on their arms.

Yet still, a complete silence falls over the crowd, only to be broken by the sound of a bugle playing the infamous tune of Taps. Pfc. Anglin won't be responding to the master gunnery sergeant's roll call then or ever again; he now responds to a higher chain of command.

Pfc. Joseph A. Anglin, a former "Black Knight" tool room clerk, died in a vehicle accident on the night of Dec. 2 on Haws Run Road. Though it was an untimely and tragic death, Marines gathered to fill the Chapel pews Dec. 6 to honor the memory and accomplishments of the Marine.

"He was proud, his family was proud and everyone around him was proud of him," said Lt. Col. Gregory M. Douquet, HMM-264 commanding officer. "He will be greatly missed."

Though Anglin's Marine Corps career was short lived, he accomplished much in his time served. He served time overseas in both Afghanistan and Iraq and devoted his free time to his body, staying constantly in shape, and his studies, taking college courses in sports medicine.

"(Private first class) Anglin was a confident, ambitious Marine with many plans for the future," said 1st Lt. Todd J. Tedeschi, HMM-264 tool room officer-in-charge. "He was physically fit and enjoyed playing sports. Anglin aspired to be a good Marine, a good son and a good man. He was also a



(Above) Marines from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-264 take time to remember Pfc. Joseph A. Anglin, a HMM-264 tool room clerk, who died in a vehicle accident the night of Dec. 2. Fellow "Black Knights" throughout the squadron gathered at the Station Chapel to honor the memory and accomplishments of the young Marine. (Right) Corporal Justin Lienemann, 2d Marine Air Wing Band trumpet player, plays Taps in memory of Anglin.

good, loyal friend to those who knew him."

And those who did know him can recall times when Anglin would fall, but always manage to get right back up, Tedeschi remembered.

"His career was one that had its troubles," Tedeschi added. "But time and time again, Joseph always managed to pull himself up off of the rocks.'

And though this may be one time that Anglin can't pull himself back up, and those who knew him will always miss his presence, his death will serve as an example to Marines and always be one that is remembered by his friends, his squadron and his

"In the end, there are no easy answers to why Pfc. Anglin had to go," said Navy Lt. David E. Rozanek, Marine Aircraft Group-26 chaplain. "If you search, hope is the only answer you will find. Hope that his (car accident) will serve as an example and hope that we will meet Joseph in heaven."

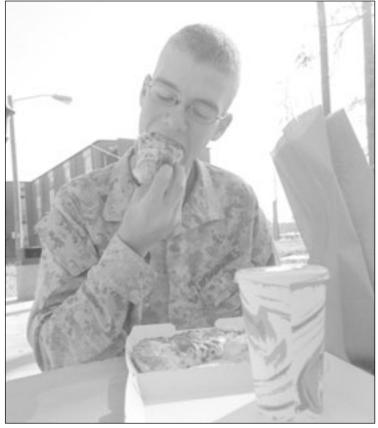


Cpl. Ezekiel R. Kitandwe



Dining Facility's SubMarine window a hit

Marines enjoy user-friendly hours, fresh food



Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb

Private Christopher A. Bloom, Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training student, eats a pepperoni pizza he received from the Station Dining Facility's new SubMarine takeout window Jan 9. The SubMarine program, which has been in effect on the west coast for a number of months, has been in planning for over a year. The new SubMarine menu offers a choice between five possible sub-sandwiches or four possible pizza choices.

Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb correspondent

Tired of waiting in the fastfood line for afternoon chow? The walk-through window for the Station Dining Facility opened Dec. 1 as an alternative to beating the inside rush.

The new "SubMarine" menus provide a large selection of sandwich and pizza meals made fresh within two minutes.

According to John Negron, Station Dining Facility civilian manager, the new window does more than just offer a new line to expedite the process of getting Marines in and out of the facility, but it also provides an entirely new menu of meals for them to choose from.

"The menus offer your choice of either a sub-sandwich or pizza," Negron said.

The sandwich menu consists of five possible pre-designed specialty sandwiches – the Meatball Marinara, Crispy Chicken, Italian, Barbeque Chicken or Turkey Club sandwich, or a "Build Your Own" section.

The "Build Your Own" menu offers three different bread types – French, Whole Wheat or Seeded Onion Bread, along with several selections of meat, condiments, cheeses and fillings.

"It's not already put together,"

said Negron. "We even make the bread ourselves."

The new SubMarine pizza menu consists of four pizza selections – Cheese, Pepperoni, Sausage and Veggie Lover.

"Whether you get pizza or a sandwich, you get a beverage, desert, chips and a fruit or vegetable pack," Negron explained.

The program is a definite hit with all the Marines, said Pvt. Christopher A. Bloom, Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training student and frequent SubMarine customer.

"I really enjoy all the food they have to offer here," he said. "I have tried pretty much everything on the menu and don't have a single complaint."

According to Master Sgt. Kevin M. Myer, Dining Facility Marine manager, the Marines and civilians working in the Dining Facility have worked very hard to get this program up and running for the servicemembers here.

"It's been a difficult several months getting this program on the road and everyone involved has really put forth a great effort," Myer said.

The SubMarine system has already been implemented in a number of dining facilities on the west coast, but the New River SubMarine system is the first on the east coast.

ROTO VIEW

What do you think of the new chow hall SubMarine window?



"It rocks. I think it's a good step toward the future of the Marine Corps."

Lance Cpl. Jeff Baxter, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29, ground support equipment, Riverside, Calif.



"It's a good idea and a good way to get food when you don't have time to wait in the chow hall."

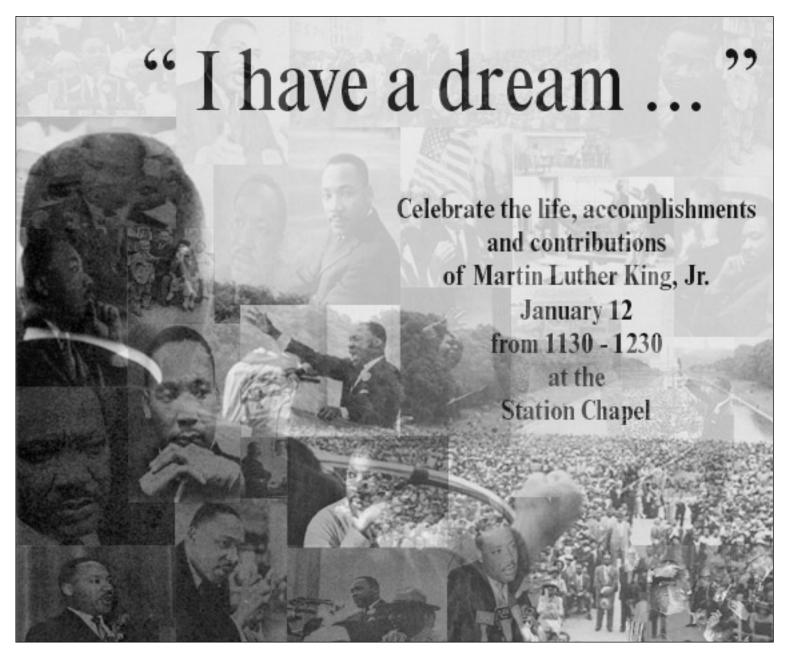
Pvt. Christopher A. Bloom, Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training, student, Sioux Falls, S.D.



"I think it is a great innovation and it's extremely convenient."

Pfc. Shane R. Malcolm, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29, ground support equipment, Sacramento, Calif.





MLK Facts

Birth: January 15, 1929

Death: April 4, 1968

Place of Birth: Atlanta

Known for: Leading the civil rights movement in the United States and advocating nonviolent protest against segregation and racial discrimination.

Milestones:

1954: Selected as pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

1955: Received his Ph.D. in systematic theology from Boston University.

1955-1956: Led a successful effort to desegregate Montgomery, Alabama, buses.

1957: Helped found and served as the first president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

1963: Wrote "Letter from Birmingham Jail," arguing that it was his moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.

1963: Delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech to civil rights marchers at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

1964: Won the Nobel Peace Prize.

1968: Was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

Did You Know:

In 1964, King became the first black American to be honored as Time magazine's Man of the Year.

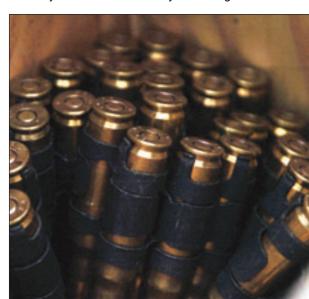
King's efforts were not limited to securing civil rights; he also spoke out against poverty and the Vietnam War.

Quote: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

L:ance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb

Lance Cpl. Jeffrey A. Cos

(Above) All four platoons that make up Marine Combat Training Battalion's Fox Company made the 10 kilometer hike out to the Camp Devildog firing ranges Jan. 6. This was the second of three hikes the Marines are required to complete before leaving for their military occupational specialty schools. (Left) A Fox Company student practices the different movements required to fire the AT-4, antitank shoulder-fired rocket launcher, Jan. 6., prior to firing the 9mm tracer rounds on the firing line. Upon arrival at the firing ranges, the students receive demonstrations and classes giving the Marines hands-on experience with each weapon prior to firing live ammunition. Each time the students move to the ranges, they receive classes to refresh their knowledge of the weapon they are going to fire. (Below) A box of .762 mm M-240G rounds rests on the ground waiting to be removed and placed into the weapon Jan. 6. Marine Combat Training Battalion students fire the M-240G and AT-4, antitank shoulder-fired rocket launcher at a destroyed tank on their first day at the ranges.



Lance Cpl. Jeffrey A. Coso

Marine Combat Training

Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb correspondent

An explosion rocks the column as a seven-ton is ripped open, spilling Marines out onto the desert terrain. In an attempt to bring aid to their wounded comrades, the men and women from the rear sprint to the front, all while evading small-arms fire.

The Marines survive the day only by utilizing the training they received from their instructors at Marine Combat Training. These are not battle-hardened infantry combat veterans – they are administrative, logistics and aviation supply Marines. They are "personnel other than grunts," but they were trained by the best.

The Military Occupational Specialty B Billet designated 8513 offers Marines the opportunity to lead and train the Corps' newest Marines in the art of combat.

"There's a lot of value in (being an instructor here)," said Lt. Col. Kevin T. Wooley, MCT Bn., commanding officer. "(This training) ties directly into what the expectations are in the fleet."

According to Master Sgt. Stewart A. Stout, MCT Battalion, operations chief, the 8513 field will be good for non-infantry MOS?

"Not only do they get to train the Marines, they also get some valuable leadership experience," said Stout.

There's a lot of responsibility in being a combat instructor; they have the rare opportunity of teaching Marines how to survive, Capt. Jaime P. Murphy, MCT Bn. operations officer, said.

"If a drill instructor sees a recruit he trained, he can say, 'I trained him to be a Marine,' if I see a Marine I trained, I can say, 'I trained him to survive in combat,'" said Sgt. Jennifer M. Hadley, Fox Company combat instructor.

In addition to the experience gained and the opportunity to forge

basically trained Marines into basically trained infantrymen, today's combat instructors have the opportunity to experience a new and improved MCT. The training schedule has undergone a series of upgrades, helping to make the training more realistic.

"A lot of lessons have been learned from Iraq," said Murphy. "It's helped us to realize how much MCT needed to change."

The old schedule bounced back and forth from classroom lessons to hands-on training, said Murphy.

Now all the classroom training is completed prior to moving out to the bivouac site.

With the new schedule, instructors can ensure the students have a good grasp of the classroom training before moving to the ranges, Murphy explained.

Marines have been training in Military Operations in Urban Terrain by performing combat operations through the MOUT town for years, but with the recent addition of "Convoy Road," Murphy explained, the Marines get to experience the realities of convoy operations just prior to entering MOUT.

"I think this new program is good because it seems to be focusing on what's more relevant as far as MOUT, urban assault and convoy operations go," added Sgt. Natalie E. Ballesteros, Fox Co., combat instructor.

According to Stout, the smaller details, such as gear upgrades, will continue to change and improve, but the basics will not.

"It's a process," Stout said. "Right now they're fielding all the new gear to Iraq, but it will filter down eventually."

Today's battles are no longer fought solely by the infantry MOS, but also by the men and women who serve in the various support roles

"Every Marine a rifleman," said Stout. "Now it's every Marine an infantrymen."



Lance Cpl. Jeffrey A. Coso



Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabl

(Above) Sergeant Andy Ferrer, Marine Combat Training Battalion, Fox Company combat instructor, assists a student with the practical application portion of the M-240G, Jan. 6. After completing a 10 kilometer hike, the Marines spend a few hours firing in the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer before moving to the firing range. (Left) A Marine Combat Training Battalion, Fox Company student fires the AT-4, antitank shoulder-fired rocket launcher, at a destroyed tank, Jan. 6. The students first watch a demonstration of an actual rocket being fired, then fire 9mm tracer rounds rather than the real thing.

Around the Corps





Cpl. James D. Hame

Master Sgt. James Silva, heavy equipment chief for 8th Engineer Support Battalion, pins corporal chevrons on his daughter, Cpl. Melanie Silva, with Marine Wing Support Squadron-272's aircraft fire-fighting and rescue section, during a promotion ceremony near Al Asad, Iraq's flightline, Jan. 1. James flew to Al Asad from Camp Al Taqaddum, Iraq, to be present for the ceremony.

Father, daughter celebrate promotion, New Year

Cpl. James D. Hamel 2d Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq -- Master Sgt. James Silva, a Laguna, N.M., native, has served in the Marine Corps for 24 years, but New Year's Day 2006, was a day like no other.

The heavy equipment operator for the 8th Engineer Support Battalion has seen many Marines attain the rank of corporal, and become noncommissioned officers, but on Jan. 1, he pinned the chevrons of an NCO on his own daughter, Cpl. Melanie Silva.

"Anytime you get promoted is a great thing," said Gunnery Sgt. Keith Kulman, the crash chief for Marine Wing Support Squadron-272's aircraft rescue and firefighting section.
"Getting promoted to NCO makes it a bonus, and then to get promoted by a family member in a combat zone makes it perfect. It doesn't get any better than that."

James said he always expected Melanie would become a Marine.

"I was not surprised because she was into the (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) in high school," said Silva, a heavy equipment chief with the 8th Engineer Support Battalion, based in Camp Al Taqaddum, Iraq. "She enjoyed it, so I always had a feeling she'd join the Marines. The (Air Force recruiters) tried to coax her into joining with them, but she wouldn't have it, she wanted to be a Marine."

She enlisted February 2004, and reported to Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 during November of the same year. Her unit deployed to Iraq in August 2005. When she received word of her deployment, she didn't think her father would be coming with her.

James was stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., with a unit that wasn't scheduled to deploy. After hearing his daughter was going to Iraq, he tried his hardest for an assignment to a unit that would allow him to go.

James joined the 8th Engineer Support Battalion and deployed in the same month as his daughter.

"I think this is really good," said Melanie. "I miss my family, but I have a little piece of it here and that keeps me going."

She said her mother was happy she and her father were able to spend the holiday together and mark such an occasion.

"She's not really too concerned about me," said James.
"She knows I'm older, and that I've been in longer. But naturally, she still has a lot of concern for her daughter."

After the festivities of the day, James returned to Al Taqaddum. Both he and his daughter are scheduled to return to the United States during March 2006. It will be a great day for both of them, but they said they'll always remember New Year's Day in Iraq.



Cpl. James D. Hame

Sergeants Matthew Vandentop and Robert Rowe, expeditionary airfield Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron-272, put one of the final pieces of AM2 matting on a newly built expeditionary marshalling pad, Dec. 27.

'Untouchables' add new dimension to Al Asad flightline

Cpl. James D. Hamel 2d Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq -- Ten Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron-272's expeditionary airfield team are adding four expeditionary marshalling pads to Al Asad, Iraq's flightlines.

The project, which began Dec. 15, will require approximately 20 days to complete and creates specific areas, out of the way of flight operations, for aircraft parking and ordnance arming and disarming.

"We might be done a little sooner," said Staff Sgt. Al'Vincent Mitchell, the project manager and a Mobile, Ala., native. "Our guys are doing wonderful. This project gives them a chance to explore another side of their (military occupational specialty), and they're doing a great job."

The other side of their MOS as expeditionary airfield Marines is the construction of expeditionary airfields.

With Al Asad's paved runways, Mitchell and his Marines normally find themselves upgrading and maintaining flightlines, not building them. Now, they're building four 96-by-48 feet marshalling pads.

"Right now the aircraft are (arming and disarming ordnance) right on the taxiway," said Sgt. Matthew Vandentop, the assistant project manager and a Rock Valley, Iowa, native. "They need a safer place to do it, that's what we're creating."

The two pads are being placed 300 feet apart for safety reasons. The other two will be used to ensure inactive aircraft don't take runway space.

The individual mats Mitchell and the team use is the AM2. The AM2 is a piece of metal, six or 12 feet

long, that maximizes friction and can be joined together with other AM2s like pieces in a puzzle.

"The project takes a lot of planning," said Mitchell. "I usually work with the aviation safety officer (of fixed wing squadrons) to coordinate so we don't disrupt anything. We also have to draw up a plan to build the pads and have it approved."

The difficulties in planning were on display as the Marines began work on the parking pad. Marine Attack Squadron-223, which uses the taxiway adjacent to the new landing pad, was concerned the small rocks thrown onto the taxiway by the construction would damage their AV-8B Harriers' engines.

Mitchell coordinated with the squadron to halt construction and clear the area until there was a long enough cessation in flight operations to continue.

Mitchell said the other challenge in building the pads is carving a smooth, stable and level foundation in the Iraqi desert.

"We use water trucks, graders and rollers to flatten the ground," he said. "We try to have a 25 on the California Bearing Ratio before we lay the pads."

The CBR is a measurement of soil density. A 100 rating is given to substances like concrete. Mitchell and the Marines of the EAF team must ensure the soil is at least 25 to minimize future problems that can occur with aircraft traffic on the AM2 matting.

"If we don't have the right rating, there's a chance the pad can sink," he said. "The mats have to be put down well. If there's unevenness, or multiple voids underneath the matting, you can shorten the pad's lifespan to six months or less. Our goal is to put it down well, so we can minimize maintenance and keep these things up for a year."



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Marine Corps Community Services personal trainer



A common misconception of the abdomen

"To achieve a flat mid-section, perform a lot of abdominal exercises often and with intensity"

This is my all-time favorite misconception. I dispel this myth at least five times a day. To get a six pack (physiologically it's actually an eight pack) or simply a flat tummy, body fat levels must be reduced significantly. This is achieved through a calorie deficit combined with exercise. In fact, unless you're competing in an event or genetically predisposed, maintaining visible abdominals is a most difficult endeavor. A few extra pounds and they disappear. Hold onto a little excess water and they vanish.

The bottom line is abdominal exercises don't give you a flat mid-section. Abdominal exercises build muscles. Good nutrition, weight training and cardiovascular exercises help to reduce overall body fat, which leads to a flat mid-section. Don't worry about building monstrous abs. The abdominal muscles are very thin, so mother nature protects us from building an abnormally large abdomen.

The abdomen is comprised of lower abs and upper abs – individuals generally appear unable to differentially recruit the "upper" and "lower" abdominal muscles.

In other words, individuals cannot trigger a contraction in one specific area of the abdominal muscles (either the upper or lower abs). Despite the common misconception among many fitness professionals and exercise enthusiasts, EMG data suggests the upper and lower rectus abdominis act as a continuous sheath (i.e., one large muscle group).

If you are looking to further your fitness accomplishments or simply need some extra workout ideas, please remember the Personal Training aboard Marine Corps Air Station New River is a free service to all active duty personnel, their spouses and dependents (be aware of age limits in facilities). Trainers all hold different hours at each facility to better accommodate individual needs. Please feel free to call building AS-4000 at 449-5854 or AS-204 at 449-5267 and make your appointment.

Leading the few: An interview with coach Cremeans

Rotovue: This has been one of New River's greatest regular football seasons; what was the biggest contributor to making this possible?

Cremeans: The biggest contributor to our great year has been the fact that our boys play as a family. They rely on each other and everyone wants to do their part to not let the rest of the team down.

R: How much stronger do you believe this "family-type bond," is this year compared to those in the past, or even compared to that of other teams in the league?

C: I think it is the strongest of any team I have ever been involved with. I put them through hell (in practices) over the summer and they survived as a team. I don't think there is another team in our league that is as tight knit as we are. They all respect what the others do and are supportive of teammates who are in a slump. They lift each other up.

R: The New River defense has per-



Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

formed better than any other defense in the league during the regular season. Will that steamrolling power continue throughout the post season?

C: Our defense shows teams how to successfully shut teams down with very little effort. I would put our defense against some colleges out there. They are that good and as much hype as they get, I would still say they are underrated.

R: If you could send a warning out to all of your future playoff opponents, what would it be?

C: "Don't even bother showing up." We want a championship and we are tired of waiting for it. We know there is only one way to get a trophy and that is straight through anyone who stands in the way.

R: What are the three words that could best describe New River or a famous quote that comes to mind?

C: Defense, heart and family and Lou Holtz, former Notre Dame football coach, said, "All winning teams are goal-oriented. Teams like these win consistently because everyone connected with them concentrates on specific objectives. They go about their business with blinders on; nothing will distract them from achieving their aims."

R: Can we expect New River to bring home a championship this year?

C: "Expect it?" No, but go ahead and throw New River up on the trophy placard, shine it up real nice and send it over to Mike Smith (Marine Corps Community Services athletic director) to put in the trophy case.

MCI EAST INTRAMURAL FOOTBALL "ROAD TO THE EGA EAST BOWL" 1 MCAS NEW RIVER SEMI-FINALS SEMI-FINALS SEMI-FINALS 2ND LAR BN 4 SCARLET DIVISION DIV CHAMP DIV CHAMP COLD DIVISION 2 HQSVCBN SEMI-FINALS SEMI-FINALS SEMI-FINALS 3 4TH MEB

RUGBY PLAYERS WANTED!

For the start of the spring season

Practices are Tuesdays & Thursdays at 5:15 p.m. on the "O" street field behind 2nd LAR

No experience necessary, all interested players are welcome! Contact: Dan Slagle at 539-1038 or Scotty Bew at





'Patriot' gains U.S. citizenship in Iraq



Cpl. Micah Snead

Sergeant Andre G. Joseph, a personnel administration chief with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26, gained his U.S. citizenship, Dec. 18, during a ceremony in Baghdad, Iraq. Joseph, a Flushing, N.Y. native, immigrated to the United States from Trinidad when he was a teenager and joined the Marine Corps after graduating from Francis Lewis High School.

Cpl. Micah Snead 2d Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq -- On Sept. 11, 2001, a young Trinidad native who relocated to New York with his family three years earlier was sitting in a U.S. Military Entrance Processing Station, waiting to take his first steps toward his future as a Marine. The terrorist attacks that day delayed his trip to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., but steeled his resolve to become a Marine.

'It was like watching something from a movie," said Sgt. Andre G. Joseph, a personnel administration chief with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26. "I was upset about it, especially since it was happening right where I was in New York. But, it was not going to let me change my

Four years later and Joseph is not only a U.S. Marine, but, after a ceremony held Dec. 18, in Baghdad, also a U.S. citizen. Joseph, a 22year-old graduate of Francis Lewis High School in Flushing, N.Y.,

worked to secure his citizenship since joining the military.

"It was something I always wanted," Joseph said. "I always felt like an American, but in fact I wasn't. Even as a Marine, it was like I was serving, but it wasn't my coun-

Joseph enjoyed his experiences in the United States and saw the military as a positive way to further himself.

"After we moved, I adapted to

the lifestyle here during high school and I always had a positive view of the military," Joseph said. "I didn't have a lot of options, not being a citizen. I met with a Marine recruiter and saw the possibilities of a future in the service. After that, I was ready to go to Parris Island as soon as I graduated. I wanted to have a solid foundation for my future."

Under normal circumstances, aliens and noncitizen nationals have to serve for three years on active duty in the U.S. military before they are eligible for citizenship. During July 2002, President George W. Bush issued an executive order to remove the three-year waiting period for servicemembers serving since the 9/11 attacks. The order will remain in effect until the president cancels

"I feel that if you are willing to join the U.S. military and fight for this country, citizenship should be automatic," Joseph said. "I was very encouraged when the president made this order. It takes a long time to get through the application process. Having to wait three years to even begin it would have been difficult."

Joseph joined the "Patriots" of MALS-26 as an administrative clerk, after recruit training. Nearing the end of a yearlong deployment to Al Asad, Iraq, and with a five-month deployment to Afghanistan under his belt, Joseph said he couldn't have picked a better squadron to join.

"This is a very tight unit," Joseph said. "It's really like a big family here. The Marines are very supportive of one another, all the way from the youngest Marine to the commanding officer. I was looking forward to deploying to Iraq with this unit because of the atmosphere it has. I wouldn't have wanted to come with anyone else."

When Joseph learned that he could finalize the citizenship process in Baghdad, he made it one of his top goals for the deployment. Faced with a frustrating application process, Joseph said his determination might have wavered if it wasn't for the support and encouragement

of his fellow Marines.

"A lot of people just didn't understand the process or have all the right information," Joseph said. "A lot of it relied on me constantly pushing it, making calls, tracking down information on my own. It was very frustrating. Sometimes I didn't know if it would happen. The squadron executive officer constantly encouraged me."

Major Marion D. Jones, MALS-26's executive officer, said helping his Marines is not just a part of the job, it's a squadron philosophy.

"We have a saying in the MALS headquarters that it is the little things that count," Jones said. "With every Marine and Sailor deployed from six months to a year in the squadron, the emphasis was to focus in on those things that will make this time more meaningful for that Marine or Sailor to keep their head in the game."

Jones said he knew Joseph had a future goal of becoming an officer and encouraging him to reach that goal meant helping him through the citizenship application.

"An individual works harder for you if they know you are sincerely interested in their well-being," Jones said. "(Joseph) sincerely desires to become a Marine officer. I am avid about enlisted Marines seeking a commission because I came from the enlisted ranks. The key to getting him there was first to get that citizenship."

Joseph was flown into Baghdad for the ceremony alongside new citizens from all different services and backgrounds.

"It was awesome," Joseph said. "I met Marines, Soldiers and Sailors from all over the world; Egypt, China, Korea, Ethiopia, all finally becoming Americans with me."

Joseph said the ceremony was a final fulfillment after years of serving a country that wasn't officially his own.

"I felt brand new again," Joseph said. "It was similar to the way graduating from recruit training feels. When I became an American, it felt like I was finally tying a knot. Now, I really am serving my country.

Jones said Joseph's accomplishment was a success for himself and the squadron as a whole.

"To be able to see someone who will not only make a good American, but also become an officer of Marines is tremendously satisfying for me," Jones said. "I own a part of the dream with him now. Besides that, I think anyone who is willing to sacrifice for this country should be a citizen. We were grateful to the civilians and staff judge advocate folks who went beyond status quo to make this a reality."

Joseph now has the opportunity to truly appreciate what it means to be an American citizen, something he said many natural-born servicemembers may take for granted.

"If you follow your family history back far enough, at some point you will find the people who struggled to become an American," Joseph said. "That legacy is something to be proud of. I am proud of what I've accomplish and I look forward to being able to tell my children about it."

Now Joseph is looking toward the future, hoping to enroll in the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program so he can accomplish two more goals, gaining a college education and an officer commission.

During his off time, he is trying to help three Marines find their way through the citizenship application process.

Joseph is looking forward to returning to his wife and family in New York when the "Patriots" leave Al Asad during early 2006, but he said he will always cherish the memories he has of his accomplishments in Iraq and the people who helped him get there.

This has been such a special deployment for me," Joseph said.



Strength in Diversity



Lt. David E. Rozanek Marine Aircraft Group-26

I have learned from observing nature that God loves diversity and variety. There is strength in diversity. Our military is a melting pot of diversity like no

other. Our military gains strength from diversity in the same way that nature and the church does.

In the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians, the Apostle Paul describes the church as one body with many parts and no part is more valuable than any other. Each part has a role to play in keeping the body healthy.

In the church, as in the military, we have great diversity: different ages, different races, different economic backgrounds, different theologies, different politics and different styles. Some people prefer to attend a large church and a contemporary worship service, while some people prefer a smaller church with a traditional service. And everyone has their favorite part of church. Some people like singing while others come for the sermon. Some people go to church for the small group Bible studies and others just like the prayer time the best.

The challenge, though, is how do you hold all the diverse parts together in one body. You do it in what we have in common, not in what makes us different. Paul says, we still

have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one mission and one eternal future together. That's why the church ought to be the place where everyone should feel wel-

As a chaplain, I am not concerned with which denomination a person belongs to. I consider all denominations equal. I don't care if you are Presbyterian, Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Evangelical or Church of Christ. I see all believers in Christ as the same and I rejoice in our diversity because I think that in our different forms of worship we bring joy to

Therefore, don't get caught up in looking for differences among believers, instead look for the things that unite us.

I think that a person should choose a church that makes them comfortable and helps them connect with God and whatever church does that is the right one for you.

Just as diversity brings strength to the Marine Corps, it brings strength to the Church. Can you imagine how weak our Corps would be if everyone was exactly the

Likewise, just imagine how boring and weak the Church would be if everyone was exactly alike. Fortunately, God created us all with unique differences and in those differences we find strength. This year, rejoice and be thankful for the diversity and variety in God's creation.

15th Chaplain of the **Marine Corps visits Station**



Rear Adm. Robert F. Burt, Chaplain of the Marine Corps, received a brief tour of Marine Aircraft Group-29 and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 and addressed a group HMH-461 Marines who participated in Joint Task Force Katrina. Burt, the 15th Chaplain of the Marine Corps, also spoke to a group of religious programs specialists during his Dec. 29 visit. Burt is slated to be the Chaplain of the Navy once his current tour is done. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb).



Memorial Chapel services

Sunday Services Catholic 9 a.m. Protestant 11 a.m.

For more information, call the Memorial Chapel at 449-6801.



Marine and Family Service Center

Retired Affairs

Each Wednesday and Friday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The retired affairs representative can provide retired servicemembers and their spouses with information regarding benefits, entitlements, privileges and legal

No appointments are necessary to attend this class, however, guests can call for information.

Play Morning

Each Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Youth Community Center Play morning is a time for mom and dad to have fun with their children who are age six and under.

For more information, please call New Parent Support Program at 451-5286.

Keystone Meetings for Teens Each 1st and 3rd Friday

6 p.m. to 7 p.m. A Boys and Girls Club

Program that offers children an opportunity to gain leadership skills, participate in and earn community service hours as well as social activities.

Teens can attend, voice their suggestions and plan events.

On the third Friday of each month, teenagers can select a prevention topic to discuss.

Pre-Separation Brief

Jan. 11

7:15 a.m. to 4:20 p.m.

This mandated brief covers all required information for the servicemember and spouse separating from the military way of life.

Topics discussed include: Pay entitlements, VA benefits, financial management, educational opportunities, transportation of household goods, job service and more.

Pre-registration mandatory through your Unit Transition Counselor.

Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

Jan. 11 and 12

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

A two-day career options workshop, which helps you assess your knowledge, skills and abilities and apply your military acquired skills in the civilian employment sector.

Topics include resume preparation, job search, interview skills, dress standards, job negotiations and much more.

Pre-registration required through your unit transition coun-

Stress Management, Part II -**Dealing With Difficult People**

Jan. 17

1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Attend this second part in our

four part series and learn practical techniques to deal with difficult

Stress Management, Part III -**Conflict Resolution**

Jan. 24

1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The third class in our four part series focuses on handling and resolving conflicts both in the home and in the workplace.

For more information about programs or to pre-register for one of the classes, call 449-6110/6185





Get on my footprints right now!

Congratulations!
Sgt. Eric & Joy Oxford
on their new Devil pup
Keith Edward
Dec. 19, 2005
Welcome to New River!



Get on my footprints right now!

Congratulations!
Lt. Sean & Jennifer McCarthy
on their new Devil pup
Meghan Marie
Dec. 27, 2005
Welcome to New River!



Get on my footprints right now!

Congratulations!
Sgts. Charles & Elizabeth Rhinehart
on their new Devil pup
Victoria Alexis
Dec. 29, 2005
Welcome to New River!



Get on my footprints right now!

Congratulations!
Maj. Michael & Cynthia Ducar
on their new Devil pup
Melissa Ann
Dec. 30, 2005
Welcome to New River!



Station Theater Movies

Jan. 11 - Jan. 25

Wed. Jan. 11	9 a.m.	Walk the Line	PG-13
	7 p.m.	Walk the Line	PG-13
Fri. Jan. 13	7 p.m.	Harry Potter and the	
	•	Goblet of Fire	PG-13
Sat. Jan. 14	7 p.m.	Harry Potter and the	
		Goblet of Fire	PG-13
Sun. Jan. 15	3 p.m.	Walk the Line	PG-13
oun oun ro	6 p.m.	Get Rich or Die Tryin	
Mon. Jan. 16	7 p.m.	Get Rich or Die Tryin	
Wed. Jan. 18	9 a.m.	Just Friends	PG-13
wod. dan. 10	7 p.m.	Just Friends	PG-13
Fri. Jan. 20	7 p.m.	Yours Mine & Ours	PG
111. 0aii. 20	9:30 p.m.	Walk the Line	PG-13
Sat. Jan. 21	7 p.m.	Yours Mine & Ours	PG
Jal. Jall. Z I	9:30 p.m.	Just Friends	PG-13
Sun. Jan. 22		Yours Mine & Ours	PG
Sull. Jall. 22	3 p.m.		
Man Ion 00	6 p.m.	Just Friends	PG-13
Mon. Jan. 23	7 p.m.	Shop Girl	R
Wed. Jan. 25	9 a.m.	Rent	PG-13
	7 p.m.	Rent	PG-13



The theater snack bar opens 30 minutes before the first movie and closes 45 minutes after the last movie begins. Movies and times are subject to

For more information, call the Station
Theater at
449-6292 or 449-6528.



A \$1 admission fee is charged for ages seven and above.



Corvette Clubs: Santa's got a new ride

Statewide car organization brings Christmas cheer to New River families

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

correspondent

When out on the Station there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my car to see what was the matter. Roars of Chevy engines ringing out through the skies, and my eyes not prepared for such a grand surprise. The sun on my back, but the day still cold and the distant sound of helicopters on patrol. When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, but 41 shining Corvettes, bringing holiday cheer.

A familiar sight to Marines and families of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 as dozens of Corvettes from North and South Carolina Corvette Clubs rolled onto the squadron's parking lot Dec. 10, bringing over three pickup truck loads of brand new toys for Christmas.

Michael Casey, coordinator for the event and former MALS-26 gunnery sergeant, has been delivering cars full of presents, with the help of fellow Corvette Club members, to Station squadrons and families of deployed servicemembers for over 12 years.

"The idea to present MALS-26 families with the gifts came to me because I was stationed here on New River for 16 years," said Casey. "I saw how tough it was for lance corporals and (privates first class) who had families during Christmas time and decided to help out in anyway I could."

Contemplating the best way to reach the families from the squadron, Casey determined there would be nothing more effective than delivering toys to the kids who might not be fortunate enough to receive them Christmas morning.

Casey presented the idea to the New Bern-Twin Rivers Corvette Club, who were enthusiastic at the prospect of helping out the families of deployed servicemembers over the holiday season.

"When I brought the idea up at one of our meetings the club jumped on it right away," said Casey. "A lot of the members wanted to donate our club funds to do the function, but I told them, 'No, the club funds should stay within New Bern. I'm asking you to support the Marines and do this as a favor to me. The funds should come out of our own pockets "

Starting with just four Corvettes, two pickup trucks and



Corvette Clubs from North and South Carolina pose with Col. Joel P. Kane, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-204 commanding officer, his car and an MV-22 Osprey. Clubs drove to the Station from as far as Myrtle Beach, S.C., to donate toys to the families of deployed servicemembers.

a Cadillac in 1993, Casey and the Corvette Club presented MALS-26 with its first car load of presents. Since that day, word has continually spread between Corvette Clubs throughout North and South Carolina and the program has grown rapidly in numbers each year.

"It has been a real blessing to watch more people support the toy drive," said Casey's wife Phyllis. "We'd like to see it grow and have more Corvette Clubs hear about the good things we are doing here and come out and support the Marines."

Clubs from as far south as Myrtle Beach, S.C., made the three-hour drive with toys for the MALS-26 families and plan to continue making the drive in the years ahead, said Jim Summy, toy drive coordinator for the Myrtle Beach Corvette Club and four-year participant.

"This is really something great for the children and we're proud to do it," said Summy. "We love to support the troops and we'll continue to make the drive north as long as they'll have us." The MALS-26 families have been more than thankful for all of the efforts of the clubs and believe this to be a real morale booster for the currently deployed squadron, said Joanne Borrelli, wife of MALS-26 commanding officer Lt. Col. Carmine J. Borrelli.

"We had no idea there would be such a large turnout," said Borrelli. "The whole event has just been wonderful and the generosity of the Corvette Club seems to get better every year."

With the MALS-26 Marines on the verge of returning from a year-long deployment, they can rest assured their families have been well taken care of while they were away and that the Corvette Clubs plan to continue this function as long as possible, said Casey.

"The Corvette Club greatly appreciates the Marines overseas and the sacrifices they make to defend our country," said Casey. "When I was in the Corps we use to say, 'The Marine Corps takes care of its own,' and we're just trying to preserve that spirit."





(Left) Gunnery Sgt. Robert L. Hooks, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 maintenance staff noncommissioned officer in charge, loads one of three pickup trucks with presents. (Above) One of 41 Corvettes packed with various toys for the MALS-26 families.